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remain unchanged, it is only the interpretation and expression of these essentials as demanded by the changed conceptions of modern life that are different from past interpretation and expression. The work of the reform movement has been, in a word, to substitute for the nationalistic, legalistic, and ceremonial form of Judaism—the product of the ages of exclusion, repression, and the ghetto—the universal and spiritual teachings that accentuate Judaism's message of ethical monotheism. The modern spirit has touched Judaism, and the reform movement sprang forth. Reform Judaism bridges antiquity and modernity, garbing the eternal verities that root in the origins of the faith in the raiment of these latter days. It proclaims the great truths that God's revelation is progressive, and that Judaism has within itself the power of adaptation to bring this revelation to successive ages. The reform movement in Judaism is part and parcel of that great change of front in the religious thought of mankind that modernity symbolizes; part, too, of the broader and freer outlook that came with the passing of mediaevalism; and as these broader and freer forces move majestically forward, there will keep pace therewith the liberal religious spirit leading men at last to God's holy hill and His tabernacle."

A. WOLF.

DR. LÉVY'S "UNE RELIGION RATIONNELLE."

Une Religion Rationnelle et Laïque: La Religion du XX^e Siècle, par LOUIS-GERMAIN LÉVY, Dr. ès lettres, Rabbín de l'Union Libérale Israélite. Troisième édition corrigée et augmentée. Paris (Librairie Critique), 1908, pp. 116.

THIS is a spirited little book, written with such verve that one is almost apt to overlook the amount of learning which it embodies. It is one of those rare books which make one feel the pulse of a living religion, so unlike the lifeless skeletons dismembered in the usual religious manuals. Dr. Lévy has a message to tell, and he knows how to tell it with effect. If the bones of French Judaism are dry, he is one of those who will help to breathe the breath of life into them so that they may live. One may not agree with all he says, but one feels the better for hearing what he has to say.

The first part of the book (*La Religion devant la Science*) is devoted to a careful consideration of the relationship between religion and science and morality. As regards religion and science, there ought to be no conflict between them so long as each confines itself to its

proper sphere. Science is concerned with phenomena, their conditions, and their mutual relations. On all such matters the established teachings of science must be accepted without demur. The teacher of religion may, rightly enough, insist on the wonderfulness of nature in all its manifestations, but he has no right to interpolate in the cosmic process any miraculous violations of the laws of nature discovered by science. On the other hand, the scientist should remember that the phenomenal world does not exhaust the whole of reality, and that the answers of science do not satisfy all the problems of human reason, or all the cravings of the human heart. When science has said all it has to say, all it attempts to say, all it can hope to say, it is just then that the larger problems begin to stare us in the face. Science does not deal with the whole of reality; it does not inquire into the ultimate origin of things; it does not speculate about their final purpose. It investigates "objects," not "subjects"; and the questions which it sets itself to answer are those of "How?" not "Why?". But it is just the "wherefore" of the world in general, and of the human soul (or "subject") in particular, that haunts the human mind with irresistible importunity. It is useless to urge that science has no answer to such questions, and that they are consequently idle questions. They may be idle for the scientist as such, but not for man, even if he is a scientist. That is why, whether good, bad, or indifferent, everybody is a philosopher after his own fashion. A scientist may sometimes speak glibly of man with his fears and hopes, his joys and sorrows, as the unaccountable product of the sport of atoms dancing to the tune of blind forces. Even so he has already exceeded the strict limits of science, though he gets no thanks for his pains. Whom can it satisfy, this story of an atom-revelry? If driven to it, who would not prefer the story of a six-days' creation to such a Witches' Sabbath?

Again, to turn to the moral aspect of the problem. Are all our ideals of conduct and of art mere delusions, mere affections of the nerves, and no more? What man of culture would not feel ashamed to disown these ideals? Must they be regarded as idle dreams merely because science has nothing to say about them? Has not the heart its own claims, and have not these claims their own validity without any need for external support? Life, our author maintains, is the criterion both of the true and the good. The full life must allow for all the claims of the spirit in all its many-sidedness: no part of the soul should be sacrificed to any other; the understanding, the will, the emotions, and the imagination must all receive due recognition and fair play. To ignore any of these claims is to live a one-sided, fragmentary life, a life of privation.

To fail in any of them, that is, to fall into intellectual or moral error, is to live a mutilated life.

Now, religion is concerned with just these larger questions as to the origin and purpose of the world in its totality, and the destiny of human life with all its manifold interests. The essence of religion is the belief in God, that is, the belief in a Supreme Spirit who has created the world and directs it to some supreme end. This belief cannot be proved; neither can it be disproved. But though it cannot be proved, there is much in what we observe and know to make its truth probable. And if one takes also into consideration the claims of the human heart, the strength and inspiration which it derives from this belief, the peace and solace with which it rests in this belief, then, indeed, the belief becomes something more than a mere belief. To dispense with it is to deprive oneself of that fullness of life which religion alone can give, it is to commit suicide, partial suicide.

As to the nature of God, to know that completely one would have to be God. As it is, we must be content with partial, fragmentary glimpses and broken lights of him. He is a Spirit, for none but a Spirit could account for the existence of human spirits or souls. What, however, concerns man chiefly is the moral character of God. Man in his twofold nature of body and soul would like to see in God at once the omnipotent Creator of nature and the supreme fountain of all goodness. But unfortunately history and nature, red in tooth and claw, thrust us on the horns of a dilemma: we must choose between a God who is omnipotent, but of limited goodness, and a God who is all good, but of limited power. Dr. Lévy inclines to the latter alternative; he prefers to sacrifice God's omnipotence rather than his goodness. The divine spirit, so thinks our author, realizes itself by submitting to an infinity of limitations, and "informing" nature in the guise of an infinity of finite modes. These limitations conditioning God's self-realization in the world of finite beings account for all that seems to impeach the moral character of God. Also, man's communion and co-operation with God is but another aspect of God's self-realization through a world of finite beings. That constitutes the essence of religion, which Dr. Lévy accordingly defines as follows: "Elle est la croyance en une puissance supérieure de caractère essentiellement éthique avec qui l'homme entre en communion et en coopération par l'activité morale (la recherche du vrai étant naturellement comprise dans cette activité)."

In the second part of the book (*Le Judaïsme devant les affirmations de la Conscience moderne*) we pass from the consideration of religion in general to Judaism in particular. "Le judaïsme (we are told)

n'est pas *une* religion parmi tant d'autres, mais *la* religion." A bold assertion, to be sure. Why, there are Jews not a few who can never apologize sufficiently to themselves and their neighbours for being Jews, yet here we find Dr. Lévy making this extraordinary claim for Judaism. Of course he does not mean rabbinic Judaism. He means Liberal Judaism, combining the moral fervour of our prophets with the best thought of all the ages. Judaism thus conceived is, he thinks, the religion most in accord with the spirit of the twentieth century. The author's own summary of his view of Judaism is worth reproducing. "Le judaïsme, tel que nous juifs français du XX^e siècle nous le concevons, non seulement ne contrarie aucune des exigences légitimes de la conscience moderne, mais y répond de la manière la plus satisfaisante. . . . Religion sans mystères, sans dogme révélé, sans théologie officielle, sans prêtres, ennemie de toutes superstitions, assoiffée de connaissance claire, n'admettant d'autre critère de la vérité que la lumière propre de la vérité, le judaïsme applaudit à l'effort scientifique et en accepte pleinement les résultats avérés; donc religion de libre examen et de spéculation libre, *recommandant* sans doute plus particulièrement telles ou telles croyances, mais ne les *imposant* point dictatorialement; les proposant à l'adhésion consentie de l'effort personnel, donc aussi religion d'initiative et de responsabilité individuelles, religion matrice de caractères. Religion essentiellement morale, prêchant le bien pour la beauté de l'idée, sans élément de crainte ni de calcul, n'encourageant point la piété oisive, contemplative, ascétique, poursuivant l'intime fusion de l'individuel et du social, s'appliquant à la réalisation des idées de justice et de paix universelle. Religion indéfiniment perfectible, puisqu'elle reçoit les acquisitions progressivement accumulées des penseurs et des savants, puisqu'elle laisse à la raison le dernier mot et donc admet la critique de ses traditions et de ses institutions, et, par voie de conséquence, doit consentir à se dépouiller de pratiques périmées et à revêtir de nouvelles formes adaptées aux conditions nouvelles."

One of the striking features of the book is the abundance of happy quotations from both Jewish and non-Jewish authorities in illustration or in support of the views presented¹. Dr. Lévy is obviously an eclectic. But it is very difficult to be anything but an eclectic at this stage in the history of thought. In relation to Jewish tradition it is well nigh impossible to be anything else. Unless one is willing to maintain the most incompatible views side by side, or have recourse to the methods of the *Pilpul*, one is com-

¹ The force of one of the quotations from J. S. Mill is spoiled by a slight omission on p. 34, line 7; the original is, "even *painful* things."

pelled to pick and choose one's authorities. And the conservative is not the less eclectic for selecting views out of harmony with modern modes of thought. Fortunately for Jews and Judaism the liberal Jew can always find some traditional view or other with which to connect his own trend of ideas, while the religion of the Prophets furnishes him with the main substance of his faith. In matters of religion, not to be one of the multitude, to belong to a small minority, nay, even to stand alone is, after all, no ground for reproach, seeing that religions have generally been made by individuals, and only marred by the multitude.

On the purely philosophic side, Dr. Lévy's book is in some ways open to criticism. The marked pragmatic standpoint, the tendency towards subjective idealism, the transcendental application of the category of causality in the cosmological argument, the Cartesian use of the conception of "eminent cause," the description of Spinoza's "Substance" as a mere "abstraction"—all these are questionable. Nevertheless, the book may well be recommended to the attention of all who are interested in Judaism and its future.

Our author is well aware, painfully aware, of the present sorry plight of religion in general and of Judaism in particular. But he has faith in his religion. And his faith suffers neither from that longsightedness which overlooks the immediate present, nor from that shortsightedness which cannot penetrate into the future. He sees the present gloom, and has visions of the coming dawn. "Israël," he writes, "qui jadis a niché parmi les aigles semble avoir désappris les routes du ciel. Il serait temps qu'il sortît d'un sommeil qui, s'il devait se prolonger, s'achèverait dans la mort. Il serait temps qu'agité à nouveau du frémissement prophétique il secouât de ses ailes la poussière des siècles, et que, reprenant son essor vers les espaces de pure clarté, il rapportât aux hommes le message de lumière et de salut."

A. WOLF.

THE ANNALS OF ISLAM.

Annali dell' Islām compilati da Leone Caetani, Principe de Teano, vol. II, dall' anno 7 al 12. With maps and photogravures, fol., 1567 pp. Milan, Hoepli, 1907.¹

THE second instalment of Prince Teano's work now lies before me in two magnificent tomes, comprising the events of the years 7 to

¹ As to vol. I see this Journal, July, 1905.